

Mother Goose News



March 2002

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The Rhode Island
Mother Goose Programs
website address is:

www.lori.state.ri.us/youthserv/mgoose

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Remarks: RI State Coordinator

by Melody Lloyd Allen

"I get so energized at these workshops, " said one family child care provider after a *You Can Count on Mother Goose* (YCCoMG) workshop. I had to agree, as Joseph Morra from CHILDSPAN and I dragged ourselves tired from the work day to lead each of five Wednesday night sessions and left bounding with shared enthusiasm for the books and related math activities. We danced in the halls, found shapes on walls, and balanced mobiles in the doorway. We counted, measured, sorted and created and uncovered patterns. We laughed, we shared ideas, and we avoided shark-infested waters. We read in English, Spanish, pictures and charts!

Michelle Vallee has done a series with Head Start parents who attended her spring MGAW series. Fellow Cranston Public Library staff participated in co-leading the sessions. They added a few books and activities and drew on *Seven Blind Mice*, *The Doorbell Rang* and *The Glorious Flight* from MGAW. Kathy Ryan is in the midst of some series in Newport and has

done a general orientation presentation with some handouts she created about the standards. Cheryl Space will be running this month in Providence. In addition, two libraries have managed to sponsor MGAW workshops this year.

As the Rhode Island *Mother Goose* Team Members have gained momentum from leading YCCoMG workshops, we are ready for a state training with librarians and agency partners on March 25. This all day training will be held at the Providence Public Library in conjunction with the *Go Figure!* exhibit. The plan is for each of the 20 librarians to receive five sets of materials for use in the fall with families recruited through their partnering agencies.

This spring, we will be doing *Mother Goose* orientations for the New England Association for the Education of Young Children conference, Eastern Connecticut Libraries, and the CHILDSPAN Summer Conference. The latter will be a bilingual presentation in English and Spanish with our newest team member, Lourdes Pichardo who works at Providence Adult Education. In this newsletter, Joan Nagy outlines the Vermont Center for the Book's plans for *Mother Goose*.

Professional Forum

Joan Nagy,
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Mother Goose Programs are a group of children's literature based programs for adults who are interested in bringing a rich and diverse experience with the four preschool cognitive domains; literacy, mathematics, science, and social studies—to preschool children.

They were created by the Vermont Center for the Book staff, with help from content specialists. The first years of life are a critical time for brain development and beginning to assemble the building blocks of concepts, skills and experiences needed to successfully enter school.

The *Mother Goose Programs* give both professionals who work with children and families and the families themselves the books, materials, activities, concepts and skills to make learning joyous.

There are currently five *Mother Goose Programs*, and they are in use in 22 states. They are: ***Beginning With Mother Goose***, introduction to literacy and language development for children 0-2; ***Growing With Mother Goose***, literacy and exploration of children's growth and development for children 3-5; ***Mother Goose Asks "Why?"***, literacy and science process skills for children 3-7; ***You Can Count On Mother Goose***, literacy and mathematics concepts for children 3-7; and ***Mother Goose Meets Mother Nature***, literacy and environmental education for children 3-7.

All *Mother Goose Programs* are based on the 11 research-based "**Principal Principles of the Vermont Center for the Book's Mother Goose Early Literacy Programs**" (VCB, 1998)

- On-going, open-ended conversations between adults and children significantly influence children's intellectual and emotional development;
- Adult modeling of behaviors conducive to learning is crucial for supporting children's interest in learning and ability to learn;
- A good story well told is an effective vehicle for acquiring knowledge of all sorts;
- The act of reading itself stimulates the sort of brain development that can strengthen language, literacy, and critical-thinking skills;
- Broad and deep language development can be taught to young children through a variety of enjoyable pre-literacy activities;
- The making of meaning is fundamentally a social act;
- Early, frequent exposure to information and ideas about the world we live in lays crucial foundations for future learning;
- For children, all play is a learning experience (and adults can learn from children's play);
- Books are meant to be savored as new pleasures and deeper understanding arise from each re-reading of even the most familiar tale.

Having worked with parents and early education and social service professionals for many years, the Center has now entered a new field—the education of child care professionals. The Center has created three two-credit courses for child care providers. These three cover the major domains of learning for children 0-6, and

help professionals use books, activities, and investigations in all the interest areas of a child care setting. They are:

- *Mother Goose Cares About the Early Years*: Educating providers to use books, language-building activities and play appropriate for children 0-3 to build early literacy interest and skills;
- *Mother Goose Cares About Literacy and Living Together*: Educating providers to use books, conversation, vocabulary, and approaches which help children 3-6 acquire emergent literacy skills and basic ideas about how people live together in families, school, neighborhood, and community;
- *Mother Goose Cares About Math and Science*: Educating providers to incorporate the language, approaches, and skills of preschool mathematics and science appropriate for children 3-6.

Courses are currently being conducted in Vermont and in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Librarians and early education professionals will have an opportunity to learn about and experience *You Can Count On Mother Goose* and *Mother Goose Meets Mother Nature* this spring when the Center hosts an Institute in Philadelphia, May 8-11, 2002.

For more information about the *Mother Goose Programs* for families or the *Mother Goose Cares About...* programs for child care providers, contact the Center at 802-875-2751, and ask for Debbie, or go on line to www.vermontbook.org or www.mothergooseprograms.org.

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Mother Goose is alive and well in Oregon! In addition to our 3 years of *Mother Goose Asks Why?* workshops in Jackson County, Salem and Multnomah County, we have trained teams from 17 communities in Oregon and provided materials for 250 families using LSTA funding.

Meanwhile, moving along with *You Can Count On Mother Goose*, workshops in Jackson County began in the fall with Title I parents and daycare providers from Roosevelt Elementary School. There was no hesitation in getting this group of creative problem solvers to engage in the YCCoMG books and activities! I'll share an ice-breaker along with an "ah-ha" moment that one of our parents shared with the group.

Keeping in mind that most of the participants' early learning experiences in math were not positive, we started with a fun activity incorporating math skills.

1. Each participant was given a sealed envelope with mystery contents.
2. They were asked to guess what the contents were and guesstimate how many objects were in the envelope.
3. After guessing the contents (M&M's) and with the envelope still sealed, they were asked to guesstimate how many of each color M&M.

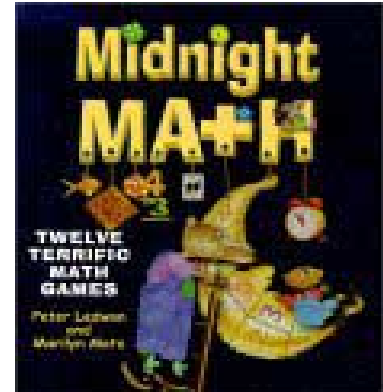
4. Once done, they opened the envelope, counted, and compared their numbers to their estimates.
5. Then came sorting, of course they immediately sorted by color, but then they were asked to sort them in some other pattern. Finally, after explaining their sorting rule to the group, they could EAT!

One of the most rewarding examples of what *Mother Goose* programs can do for parents was provided by one of the participants. During the week, she was working on a project at home. She put all the parts and the screws, bolts, nuts, that she needed in a pile. Soon after, her son came in, and he immediately started playing with the pile putting the bolts in one pile, nuts in another, etc.

The parent said she normally would have thought her son was just messing around and would have told him to leave it alone so he wouldn't lose anything. But having just been to the *Mother Goose* session on **Patterns and Relationships**, she realized that he was sorting objects into categories! Recognizing the learning process behind her son's behavior helped her to be more patient and to communicate with him about what he was doing, Math!

YCCoMG was a hit with these parents and daycare providers. They left with a new outlook and appreciation for math in daily life, not to mention the realization that math can be fun! The second YCCoMG group in Jackson County starts in March. Who knows what will be revealed through *Mother Goose* then!

Feature Book



MIDNIGHT MATH

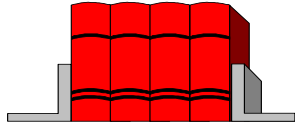
Twelve Terrific Math Games
By Peter Ledwon & Marilyn Mets

Only slightly surreal, three mouse-like critters have a good time playing math games while the household sleeps. Chester, Leon, and Maury (don't miss her fuchsia sneakers!) count stars (and the points on them) in *Star Search*, and hide snacks (and consume a few) in *Hot Salsa* and *Snack Attack*.

Using dice and a deck of cards in several other games (*Dicey Pairs*, *Something Fishy*, *Jacks Back*), each game is simple enough for basic skills: addition, subtraction, and multiplication, and the games are mildly amusing.

Pictures pack a pow here: neon and acid blues, purples, and reds glow; the layout borrows from comic books; and the type is white-on-dark or black-on-light depending on the background. The illustrations seem to use collage, cutout, and computer-generated effects to make a nicely layered look. There is an Answers page, with further suggestions for math games. (ages 5-7)

Professional Books



Games for Reading

Playful Ways to Help Your Child Read

By Peggy Kaye

Peggy's *Games for Reading* helps children read by doing what kids like best: playing games. There's a "bingo" game to help children learn vocabulary and a rhyming game to help them hear letter sounds more accurately.

There are mazes and puzzles, games that train the eye to see patterns of letters, games that train the ear so a child can sound out words, games that awaken a child's imagination and creativity, and games that provide the right spark to fire a child's enthusiasm for reading.



Games For Math

Playful Ways to Help Your Child Learn Math

By Peggy Kaye

At a time when the poor math performance of American school children has labeled us a "nation of underachievers," what can parents--often themselves daunted by the mysteries of mathematics--do to help their children?

In *Games for Math*, Peggy Kaye--teacher *extraordinaire*--gives parents more than fifty marvelous and effective ways to help their children learn math by doing just what kids love best: playing games.

Website to Wonder



Get Ready To Read!

www.getreadytoread.org

The vision of the *Get Ready to Read!* Program is that all preschool children will have the skills they need to **learn to read** when they enter school. This web site is part of NCLD's (*National Center for Learning Disabilities*) initiative to provide parents and early childhood teachers and caregivers with ideas and tools to help build literacy skills.

Learning to read doesn't start when a child enters school: it starts much earlier. Many of the building blocks for literacy development begin in the preschool years.

Let **Get Ready to Read!** answer your questions: How do children get ready to learn to read and write? Why do some children struggle when learning to read? How can I tell if a child is building the early literacy skills he needs? How should I help children become successful readers?

Four subsections in the **Educators** section are designed to give practical information and ideas for how to create a literacy rich environment in their early childhood program.

•**Early Literacy:** Find out how young children get ready to learn to read and write and what skills assist success in reading.

•Frequently Asked Questions

Find answers to your questions about getting preschoolers to read.

•Things To Do

Ideas of things to do in your program to help your children to get ready to read.

•Programs & Resources

Learn more about how early childhood programs can support your child's development.

A Web Site of Wonder!



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